

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8289

INFO RUEABND DEA HQS WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 17848

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : SNAR, TH

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR PROPOSAL FOR METROPOLITAN POLICE NARCOTICS UNIT

DEA HQS PASS ALBRIGHT/MCT AND CUSACK/EOL.
TOKYO FOR DCM MASTERS

REF: A. BANGKOK 17462 B. BANGKOK 17213

SUMMARY: THE METROPOLITAN POLICE HAVE TAKEN THE ENCOURAGING STEP OF ESTABLISHING A NARCOTICS UNIT AND HAVE REQUESTED DEA ASSISTANCE IN ORGANIZING THE UNIT. WE BELIEVE THAT DEA SHOULD SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE BY FINANCING THE UNIT'S FIRST YEAR OPERATIONS.

ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE EA INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON NARCOTICS CONTROL IMMEDIATELY APPROVE DEA FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE METROPOLITAN POLICE NARCOTICS UNIT FOR ONE YEAR.

1. WE WELCOME THE THAI INITIATIVE IN ESTABLISHING A METROPOLITAN POLICE NARCOTICS UNIT (MPNU). MAJOR
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GENERAL SANEH SITTIPANTH, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF THE

METROPOLITAN POLICE, PERSONALLY SELECTED 14 OF HIS BEST MEN TO FORM THIS NEW UNIT AND GAVE THE MPNU RENOVATED OFFICE SPACE IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE HEADQUARTERS. THIS OFFICE SPACE WAS DESTROYED DURING THE OCTOBER 15 CONFLAGRATION OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE HEADQUARTERS AND THE UNIT IS NOW WITHOUT A HOME. THE MPNU ALSO LACKS FUNDS FOR THE EQUIPMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES NECESSARY TO BEGIN OPERATIONS THIS FISCAL YEAR.

2. THE METROPOLITAN POLICE HAVE REQUESTED DEA'S ASSISTANCE IN ORGANIZING THE MPNU AND FUNDING ITS FIRST YEAR EXPENSES. AFTER THE FIRST YEAR, ALL MPNU OPERATING EXPENSES WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE REGULAR METROPOLITAN POLICE BUDGET WHICH WOULD TAKE EFFECT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THAI FISCAL YEAR ON 1 OCTOBER 1974.

3. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT AN EXISTING THAI POLICE DIVISION HAS INVITED DEA TO SET UP A NARCOTICS UNIT WITHIN ITS ORGANIZATION. AT PRESENT THE THAI POLICE HAVE NO EFFECTIVE SYSTEM FOR REPORTING, INDEXING, OR RETAINING NARCOTICS INFORMATION. BY FUNDING THE MPNU'S FIRST YEAR OPERATIONS, DEA WILL HAVE THE NECESSARY INFLUENCE TO SET UP A TRULY PROFESSIONAL NARCOTICS UNIT USING ESTABLISHED DEA ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES. THE MPNU WOULD BE A MODEL FOR OTHER POLICE DIVISIONS TO COPY. IF THE PROJECT STARTS WITH INADEQUATE FUNDING AND EQUIPMENT, THIS OPPORTUNITY WILL BE LIKELY BE LOST.

4. WE SEE SEVERAL PROBLEMS IN SUPPORTING THE PROJECT WITH AID NARCOTICS FUNDS. THESE FUNDS CANNOT BE USED TO PURCHASE TITLE III EQUIPMENT. ALSO, USOM DOES NOT PAY PER DIEM, MILEAGE, REWARDS (PE/PI), AND TRANSLATOR-INTERPRETER/SECRETARY COSTS TO THAI POLICE UNITS ENGAGED IN COUNTERINSURGENCY. THESE COSTS HAVE NORMALLY BEEN MET FROM RTG COUNTERPART FUNDS. FINANCING THESE COSTS FROM AID FUNDS WOULD MEAN A SHARP CHANGE IN USOM POLICY AND WOULD ENDANGER OUR BROADER POLICY ON ASSISTANCE TO THE THAI POLICE.

5. USOM WILL PROVIDE MOST OF THE OFFICE EQUIPMENT REQUESTED IN REF. B, INCLUDING AIR CONDITIONERS, TYPEWRITERS, CONFIDENTIAL

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DESKS, CHAIRS, TABLES AND BRIEFCASES, FROM EXCESS STOCKS. WE WILL SEND A LIST SOONEST OF THE EQUIPMENT WHICH USOM CAN SUPPLY. NO FUNDING WILL BE NEEDED FOR THIS EQUIPMENT.

6. ASIDE FROM THE EXCESS EQUIPMENT WHICH USOM WILL PROVIDE, WE RECOMMEND THAT DEA FUND USG SUPPORT FOR THE MPNU. DEA PREVIOUSLY SUPPORTED THE SPECIAL NARCOTICS ORGANIZATION (SNO) WITH CARS AND ALL OF THE ITEMS LISTED IN REF. B, EXCEPT

MILEAGE FOR PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES. WE DO NOT WISH TO SET A PRECEDENT BY FUNDING THIS MILEAGE, BUT DEA BANGKOK BELIEVES THAT THE MPNU MUST HAVE MOBILITY UNTIL IT OBTAINS ITS OWN VEHICLES. WE WILL, THEREFORE, ASK THE THAI POLICE TO EXPLORE FURTHER THE POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING FUNDS FOR MILEAGE OR BORROWED VEHICLES FROM OTHER POLICE UNITS. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, WE WILL CONSIDER OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO ENSURE MOBILITY FOR THE NEW MPNU. IF USOM CAN PROVIDE ALL OF THE NEEDED OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND THE USG DOES NOT PAY MILEAGE, THE TOTAL FUNDING NEEDED IS ABOUT \$22,000.

7. WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD ACT PROMPTLY TO SUPPORT THE METROPOLITAN POLICE INITIATIVE IN SETTING UP A NARCOTICS UNIT. THE NEW LEADERSHIP OF THE TNPD HAS CLEARLY INDICATED THE HIGH PRIORITY IT GIVES TO NARCOTICS CONTROL. THE METROPOLITAN POLICE HAVE TAKEN THIS CUE BY ESTABLISHING THE MPNU AND CHOOSING GOOD MEN TO STAFF THE UNIT. BY JUDICIOUS USE OF THIS RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNT OF MONEY, THE USG CAN INSURE THAT A PROFESSIONAL NARCOTICS UNIT BEGINS OPERATIONS IN THE IMPORTANT BANGKOK METROPOLITAN AREA THIS YEAR. WE SHOULD SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY BY OFFERING OUR IMMEDIATE SUPPORT.

9. ACTION REQUESTED: WE RECOMMEND THAT THE EA INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON NARCOTICS CONTROL IMMEDIATELY APPROVE DEA FUNDING OF ABOUT \$22,000 TO SUPPORT THE MPNU FIRST YEAR OPERATIONS. THIS SUPPORT WOULD INCLUDE ALL OF THE ITEMS LISTED IN REF. B EXCEPT THAT OFFICE EQUIPMENT WHICH USOM CAN SUPPLY FROM LOCAL EXCESS STOCKS AND MILEAGE FOR PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES.
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